

APHIS mobilized thousands of workers in a response that included an investigation of over 77 million birds, administration of 113 million doses of vaccines, and maintenance of a quarantine zone spanning 45,000 square miles. Success was achieved in 1974 and marked the first time any country had eradicated such a widespread outbreak of the deadly disease, and it provided a blueprint for future animal disease control efforts. Using lessons it learned from the earlier outbreak, APHIS again lead a taskforce of Federal, State, and private veterinarians in 2002 to effectively stamp out an exotic Newcastle disease outbreak in California and other Western States. This time, however, APHIS and its partners eradicated this devastating disease in one-third the time and at one-half the cost of prior outbreaks, protecting the health of the country's poultry resources, worth more than \$23 billion.

Through the National Boll Weevil Eradication Program launched in the late 1970s, APHIS and its partners eradicated boll weevil from 16 of 17 cotton-producing States, with the last, Texas nearing completion of its eradication efforts. This three-decade effort has succeeded through the participation and cooperation of industry, State and Federal agriculture agencies, and APHIS in sharing costs and developing and improving eradication strategies to meet every challenge. APHIS continues its myriad of programs dedicated to keeping harmful and invasive plant pests and diseases out of this country and eradicating them quickly should they arrive. Recently, APHIS and its State and industry partners have nearly eliminated European grapevine moth infestations, keeping domestic commerce and foreign markets open for grapes, stone fruit, berries, and other commodities that would otherwise have been threatened by the pest.

APHIS assumed a new mandate for wildlife damage management in 1985, after Congress transferred the Animal Damage Control program from the Department of the Interior to USDA. Through this program, APHIS provides Federal leadership and expertise to resolve wildlife conflicts to allow people and wildlife to coexist. APHIS has provided critical support to U.S. agricultural producers over the years finding practical, humane, effective, and environmentally safe solutions when wildlife attack livestock or damage crops. But the program's impact extends beyond agriculture to urban areas, where they work to reduce wildlife hazards at the Nation's airports and military airbases, eradicate invasive species such as the Giant Gambian rat, and combat wildlife rabies.

APHIS' role in the Federal biotechnology era began in 1986 with the "Coordinated Framework for Regulation of Biotechnology," which outlined a comprehensive U.S. Government regulatory policy for ensuring the safety of biotechnology research and products. In November 1987, using new policies for regulating the introduction of genetically engineered organisms that might pose risks to plants, APHIS for the first time approved a field test, for a tobacco resistant to the herbicide bromoxynil. Since then, the Agency has overseen nearly 30,000 field trials at over 86,000 different locations and approved over 80 products for nonregulated status—many of which have subsequently been further developed and released as varieties used in agriculture benefitting farmers and consumers

while decreasing overall pesticide use and soil erosion.

APHIS' role in protecting and promoting the health of U.S. agriculture is also critical in the international trade arena. As part of the move to support growth in international trade while fulfilling APHIS' mission to protect American agriculture, APHIS inspectors began preclearing imports destined for the United States before they left their country of origin in the 1980s. APHIS also began employing other approaches to ensure that imported commodities were free of pests and diseases—X-ray detection devices began screening baggage for illegal material, and APHIS' "Beagle Brigade," established in 1984, sniffed out prohibited foods in passenger luggage. Throughout the years, APHIS' ability to quickly respond to outbreaks of foreign plant pests and diseases, helps assure our trading partners that U.S. products are safe and that the United States is a model for protecting the health and abundance of agriculture.

Today, APHIS continues to enhance its animal welfare efforts, overseeing the care and treatment of animals regulated under the Animal Welfare Act at licensed and registered facilities throughout the United States and its territories. APHIS' risk based inspection system enables the Agency to focus its resources on the most problematic facilities and pursue enforcement against violators.

Lastly, I applaud APHIS for continuously seeking to work together with its partners and stakeholders to achieve success in its programs. APHIS is an Agency that recognizes that it must actively work with States, Tribal Nations, industry and other stakeholder groups to help manage the many issues that affect U.S. agriculture. This coordinated effort has enabled the Agency to be successful in protecting our valuable agricultural and natural resources. We have seen the results of this approach, for example, as the Agency has implemented the Plant Pest and Disease Management and Disaster Prevention provisions of the 2008 Farm Bill. This joint effort by APHIS, states, industry, academia, and other stakeholders has yielded great benefits—helping eradicate devastating plant diseases such as Plum Pox in Pennsylvania, increasing surveys to find foreign pests before they can become established in the United States, educating the public on reducing the spread of these pests, and enhancing research so we have better tools to protect our country from threats to our agricultural and natural resources.

As you can see, through the decades, APHIS has continued to modernize in demonstrating its vitality and significance to farmers, exporters and importers, and consumers. APHIS' leadership in protecting and promoting the health of U.S. agriculture has served the United States well. For that, I want to congratulate APHIS and its hard working employees for a highly successful 40 years, and applaud their continued commitment to the American people and U.S. agriculture.

HONORING MILFORD HIGH
SCHOOL'S WE THE PEOPLE
STATE CHAMPIONSHIP TEAM

HON. CHARLES F. BASS

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 16, 2012

Mr. BASS of New Hampshire. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the members of Milford High School's We the People state championship team.

We the People is a national competition that tests students' knowledge of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. Teams from all over the country compete for various prizes and awards. With the help of their teacher, Dave Alcox, and after many months of dedication and hard work, the Milford High School team placed first in New Hampshire's We the People State Championship. In doing so, they earned a spot to compete in the National Championship here in Washington, DC earlier this month, where they placed 30th overall and first in the Unit 3 division out of more than 50 teams. I want to congratulate the following students for their accomplishments and inspiring commitment to their team:

Kelsey Bailey; Jack Betelak; Cara Brewer; Jess Byrne; Laura Elser; Mathias Christensen; Josh Clemens; Paige Craven; Emily Curry; Bekah Curtis; Molly Desmond; Adam Drescher; Robby Finan; Ryan Fitzgerald; Melissa Gray; Sarah Halstead; Ryan Hull; Kyle Joyce; Hannah Ladeau; Ally LaForge; Katie Lannin; Julia Lengvarska; Tom Lundstedt; Comfort Dum Maude; Zach O'Neill; Jon Penniman; Jason Porter; Nick Simo; James Smith; Natasija Vucicevic; and Brittney White.

Mr. Speaker, the people of New Hampshire join me in congratulating these students on a job well done, and I wish them all the best in what I know will be a very successful future.

JOSE AVILA

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 16, 2012

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Jose Avila for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Jose Avila is an 11th grader at Jefferson Senior High and received this award because his determination and hard work have allowed him to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Jose Avila is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Jose Avila for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt he will exhibit the same dedication and character in all his future accomplishments.